

6.75-1

ANNALS
OF THE
FAMILY OF
FRASER

1805

National Library of Scotland



B000241658

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
National Library of Scotland

(767 (11)



ANNALS
OF
THE FAMILY OF FRASER.



ANNALS
OF
SUCH PATRIOTS
OF
THE DISTINGUISHED FAMILY
OF
FRASER, FRYSELL, SIM-SON,
OR
FITZ-SIMON,
AS HAVE
SIGNALIZED THEMSELVES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE
OF
SCOTLAND:
FROM THE TIME OF THEIR FIRST ARRIVAL IN
BRITAIN,
AND APPOINTMENT TO THE OFFICE OF
THANES OF THE ISLE OF MAN,
UNTIL THEIR SETTLEMENT AS
LORDS OF OLIVER CASTLE AND TWEEDALE,
IN
THE SOUTH,
AND
LORDS OF LOVETH,
IN
THE NORTH.

EDINBURGH:

FIRST PRINTED IN 1795;

REPRINTED BY JAMES BALLANTYNE
IN 1805.



TO HIS
SACRED MAJESTY
THE KING,
THIS
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
IS
MOST HUMBLY DEDICATED
BY
HIS MAJESTY'S
MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,
THE EDITOR.

GILLESPIE MAC-SHIMI, XXXVIII.

TO

KINSMEN AND FRIENDS.

IN these latter days, when the unindustrious, irreligious, and unlettered part of the multitude, seem to wish all order dispersed into a general chaos, whence they hope to draw new advantages, by fresh arrangements, better suited to dissipation and translation of property, than any forms of constitutional society now existing :—

—Being called, by duty and inclination, to support and maintain that Constitution under which we do already enjoy the most complete liberty of person and religion,—it becomes a duty both to my Sovereign and my Country, to lay before you short Annals, founded on record and undeniable facts, of those bright models of loyalty, patriotism, and valour, which your ancestors perfected at the expence

of their lives and fortunes ; and to hope and pray, that the God of Justice, Virtue, and Faith, may enable each and all of you to be faithful to the last, in contending for and maintaining your own honour, coupled with the true interests and solid glory of your Country !

I have therefore committed the few following sheets to the press, on this 25th February 1795, being the Anniversary of, and

492 years after the Battle of Roslin :

558 since the Frasers, by royal charter, settled in Inverness-shire ; and

995 from the time that the most probable tradition, supported by monastic chroniclers, and the labours of their senachies, from father to son, together with the legends of the country whence they came, place the period of their arrival in Scotland.

PREFACE.

THE Ancient spelling and diction that sometimes occur in the following Annals, are preserved, and transmitted in the way handed down in Manuscript, agreeable to the periods of time in which they were committed to writing.

Entered in Stationers Hall.

OUR more ancient antiquaries assert, that our ancestors came from Ireland, and they from Spain, Greece, and Egypt; whilst some of our modern antiquaries make them originally Scythians. In the times of Cæsar and Tacitus, the inhabitants of South Britain gave no account of their first settlements in the island. Yet these distinguished historians observe, that they resembled the Gauls in their devotion; their religious rites were the same as in Gaul, performed by the Druids in their Gælic or Sceltic, which was of old the language of the west of Europe, as it is now of the Highlands of Scotland, of Wales and Ireland, though the Welsh is greatly corrupted by Saxon words.

It has been the misfortune of Scotland, that none who wrote the history of its antiquities, understood its ancient language, which has made our most learned antiquaries stumble on blunders, which a very superficial knowledge of the Gælic would have prevented; as, for instance, they have derived Drudies from *Drus*, an oak, and thence infer, that they performed their religious rites under an oak tree: whereas, the Druids deemed it unworthy of the Deity to be

worshipped unless in the open air. Their temples had no covering; and all those remaining in the north of Scotland are complete *Horo Scopes**: Manifesting their rituals, were performed by day; and their form not only answers the descriptions which the Romans gave of them, but bearing their names in many places, *Tighna-dhruidnach*, i. e. the house of the Druids, to the present day.

Had these learned antiquaries been acquainted with the original language of Gaul and Britain, they needed not have travelled to Greece for the meaning of the word; for *Durdh*, or *Durdheach*, is the common word now used for an enchanter, or wizard; and *durdhachd* is enchantment. And this Gaelic word has undergone the same change that the Greek word *Magos* has done, which originally was a name of honour and respect, but came afterwards to be used in an ill sense, and to signify a magician.

So *Durdh*, which was first a name of respect, given to their priests, when Christianity took place, was applied to enchanters; for such they reckoned the Heathen priests.

I could give many other instances to the same purpose. Our antiquaries derive Albion, the ancient name of Britain, from the Latin word *albus*, white.

* Sun dials:—also showing the Equinox and Solstice, and, in so far, serving as perpetual Almanacks.

The name that Scotland still retains in Gaelic is *Alabin*, which in that language signifies, literally, wild mountains, from *alla*, wild, and *bin*, mountains; thus a Scotsman, *Albanach*, literally, inhabitants of wild mountains.

But whether Scotland was first peopled from Ireland, or Ireland from Scotland, it is evident they were originally the same people, by their speaking the same language.

And it is no less evident, that there came colonies from the northern parts of Europe, who spoke the Saxon, or Teutonic, and settled in Scotland. The latter landed in the most northern part of this island, which they called Cat-ness, as they called the country that lay immediately south of them Sutherland.

The natives who were in the country before them, and spoke the Gaelic, called them Gaul or Goile, the common designation they gave to all foreigners, and the country they called Gallon. When the latter extended farther south, and came to possess the country called by them Sutherland, instead of the general name of Gaul or Foreigner, the natives came to know what they were, and called them Cattich, and the country Catton, which names Catness and Sutherland still retain in the Gaelic. Thus, Lord Sutherland is called *Moror Catta*; and Lord Catness, *Moror Gaul* *.

* Count Ferzin in Sweden, and Baron Ferzin in Eustonia, near Revel, now in the service of Russia, asked me many questions about

As to the ancient family, distinguished by the surname FRASER, all our antiquaries seem to be agreed, that they are of a Gaulic origin; but are uncertain as to the precise æra they first came into this realm.

Our historians, however, mention this surname among the first of those we had from Gaul *, and as soon as any of the surnames which became hereditary.

Sir George M'Kenzie, Lord Advocate of Scotland, and a great antiquary and herald, derives them from *Pierre Fraser, Seigneur de Troile*, a French gentleman, who came to Scotland with the ambassadors of Charlemagne, about the year of our Lord 807 †, and mentions the armorial bearing of the family, which was, and still is, a field azure, *semi*, with strawberries, called in French *fraises*. These were afterwards reduced to seven (as sculptured on the Cross at Peebles), and now to three. This first importation of Frasers were made Thanes of the Isle of Man, where one of the Baronial families remain to this day, and are distinguished by the Gælic surname *Frizel* ‡.

the descendents of their family, who had landed in Scotland; and on my mentioning, that M'Pherson of Cluney, chief of that tribe, was my Sister's Son, they redoubled their attention and kindness, with which they had before loaded me. *Anno 1777. Edit.*

* Boethius. Hollingshed, &c.

† Crawford's Life of Sir Alexander Fraser.

‡ Baron Frizel's eldest son distinguished himself under Earl Howe, in the Naval Victory 1st June 1794, on board the Royal Charlotte; and his second son, whose literary abilities are well known in Edinburgh University, is a prisoner in France. *Edit.*

The Following is the Account given by Sir GEORGE M'KENZIE, which has been found to agree, in many particulars, with the discoveries of the lawyers sent, not long since, into the Isle of Man, in their researches for the Families of D'ESLEY and ATHOLE.

ANE

ACCOMPT OF THE SIRNAME OF FRASER.

PEIRRE FRASER,

A French Gentleman, came to Scotland, about the year 800, when the first League was made betwixt France and us: he was one of the Captains sent to Charles, with the troupes against Disoderius of Lombardie. He married Fergusina, or Androlina, daughter of Sholta, first progenoter of the Douglasses, by whom he had Charles, born in Italy, whom Charles the Empror held wpon the baptismall font; this Charles was made Thane of the Isle of Man in 814, and married Eugenia, daughter to Donald Graham, progenoter to Montrose, and had ishow,

ACHAIES FRASER,

First of the Name, second Thane of Man: he married Feileneea, daughter to Eithus, surnamed the Suift, the 72d King of Scotland, who reigned *ano* 879, and had ishow,

CHARLES FRASER,

The Second of that Name, and third Thane of Man: he married Isobella, daughter to Oudwain, surnamed the Great, progenoter of the family of Argyll, and had ishow,

CHARLES,

The Third of the Name, and fourth Thane of Man: he married Valigna, daughter to Ochanchar, progenoter of the flourishing family of the Forbeses, and had ishow,

ACHAIES FRASER,

Second of the Name, and fifth Thane of Man: he lived in the year 950, and married Susana, daughter of Gregory Dunbar, progenoter of the nobel family of the Earlds of March, and had ishow,

GREGORY FRASER,

Sixth Thane of Man: he married Heildeberg, daughter to Pheian, youngest son to the Earl of Fisberrie, in Northumberland, of the Danish race, and had ishow,

WALTER FRASER,

First of the Name, and seventh Thane of Man: he married Margrat, daughter to Thane Buries, Reinald M'Donald, who was son to Gilbert, Lord of the Illes, and had ishow,

ALEXANDER FRASER,

Eight Thane of Man: he married Margratt daughter of Walter Cumin of Strathbogy; of this Walter, the Earles of Buchan are descended, and had ishow,

WALTER FRASER,

Second of the Name, ninth Thane of Man: he lived about 1034, he married Marjory, daughter of Sir William Oliphant, progenoter of the Lord Oliphant; he had ishow,

WALTER FRASER,

Third of the Name, tenth Thane of Man: he lived about 1055, he married Loreno, daughter to Beroldus, a younger son to the Earle of Flanders, of the familay of Innice, and had ishow,

ALEXANDER FRASER,

Second of the Name, eleventh Thane of Man: he lived in 1080, he married Marion, daughter to Walter Stewart, Great Senchall of Scotland, grandson to Bancho Stewart, progenoter of all Stewarts, and had ishow,

ALEXANDER FRASER,

Third of the Name, thuelth Thane of Man: he lived 1093, he married Cristina, daughter to Walter Oliver of Blackfoord, by the daughter of Ferchard, Earle of Strathern, and had ishow,

OLIVER FRASER,

Thirteenth Thane of Man, and first Lord of Oliver Castel *, which house he built in Twides Muir, and called it by his name, he lived *ano* 1110, and married Isobel Lyon, daughter to Henry, Thane of Glen-lyon.

* Oliver Castle was afterwards erected into a Constabulary, and always first called over in the roll of Peebles.

THE immediate predecessor of LORD LOVETH, was Simon Fraser, son of the Lord Fraser, and nephew to King Robert Bruiss.

This Simon Fraser of Loveth, and Andrew and John his brothers, were slain at the battle of Holly-down Hill, 1333. Some think this John ancestor of PHILORTH.

His grandchild, Hugh Fraser of Loveth, does homage to John, Bishop of Murray, for some lands he held of him, in *anno* 1367. His grandchild, again, Hutcheon Fraser of Loveth, sat as Lord in Parliament, *anno* 1430, about which tyme he married Janet Fenton, daughter to William de Fenton; the contract is in the Register, confirmed 16. Sept. 1630.

The next Cadet of the family is FRASER of PHILORTH, now *Lord Salton*, by succeeding to the title of Lord Abernethy, which descends to heirs female, and whose daughter he married; he quartereth, with his paternal coat, the armes of the Earl of Ross; viz. g. ane Lyon rampant, arg. His predecessor was a son of the ancient Lord Fraser, in the very next generation after Fraser of Loveth, and was Thane of *Cowie*; he married Jane Ross, one of the co-heirs of William, Earle of Ross, and got with her the lands of Philorth and Pitsligo, about the year 1374. The eldest, Beatrix, was married to Walter Leslie, who in her right was Earle of Ross after the death of Earl William, and in his lyf-time was stiled Lord of Ross and Philorth. The Thane of Cowie had a second wife, to whose children he gave the lands of Dorres, which is a part of the Thanedom, of whom is descended Sir Alexander Fraser of Doires, physician to the King*, now represented by the Earl of Peterborough.

* *i. e.* Ch. II. and, if we mistake not, Sir Elijah Impey is maternally descended from this Sir Alexander Fraser of Doris.

FRASER of *Muchil* is said to be a cadet of Doires. This family is now advanced, by King Charles, to the dignity of a Lord of Parliament, in *ano* by the title of Lord Fraser of Muchil.

Philorth and others were not satisfied with that title ; but, by Act of Parliament, it was found, that he might and ought to be so styled, though he be not chief of the name.

Fraser, Lord Fraser, olim. 5. cinque foills, arg.

Fraser, Lord Lovat, az. 5. cinque foills, arg.

Fraser of Kinnell and Brubie, az. cinque foills, arg. pierced or. with a \cup for a 2d brother.

Fraser of Philorth, quart. 1st az. 3. cinque foills, arg. a lyon ramp. g. 3d, as 1st,—4th, as 2d.

William Fraser, Bishop of St Andrews, was one of the three governors with M'Duff and John Cumin, E. of Buchan.

Simon Fraser is a benefactor to the abbey of Kelso, and his charter is confirmed by King William.

Sir Andrew Fraser was one of the auditors appointed between the Bruiss and Baliol at Berwick, 1292, be K. Edward. In his scall are 6. *frases*, 3. 2. and 1.

Andrew Fraser, sone to Sir Gilbert, gives to Kelso his lands in the tenement of West Gordon, as they were possessed by Alicia Gordon, and Sir Adam Gordon: *Ano* 1308, agrees with the convent about the said land, gifted to her by Andrew Fraser.

Sir Alexander Fraser was *Camerarius Scotie et Miles*, in the 16th of King Robert's reign.

A SECOND IMPORTATION came with William, Duke of Normandy, surnamed the Conqueror, some of whose descendents are yet extant in Shropshire ; and there may have been more at different periods afterwards, for they were a numerous family in France, where historians mention the following incidents relative to the surname of Fraser :

Hugh de Arles, base son to Lothario, King and Duke of Burgundy, made a strong faction to the king in the minority of his brother, Rodolph, beyond the mountains in Savoy and Switzerland. The contest turned hot ; at last, Pope John X. threatens Hugh with interdiction and excommunication.

The French history tells us, that Clemens, Cardinal de Montcalto, Apostolical Legate, did accordingly excommunicate the kingdom of Burgundy. This sentence was so terrible to Hugh of Arles and his accomplices, that they agreed to submit the difference betwixt the brothers to Charles the Simple, the Cardinal Clemens, and Albert, Bishop of Lyons.

The arbiters met, and pitched their tents on the banks of the Soan near Lyons. The submission terminated in a division of their territories, in favour of Duke Rodolph, who, upon his brother Hugh's voluntary resignation, was declared King of Burgundy, to be held of Charles King of France, who was Emperor

of the West. The sentence of excommunication was taken off, and the agreement signed at Lions, the 10th April, 916.

The King sets out with a grand retinue from Lions, and by the way at Avergne, near Bourbon, he prepared an elegant entertainment for the Cardinal, who was to part with him there.

One Julius de Berry, a gentleman who lived there, waited on the King at the close of the entertainment with several sallads and fruits; but what was most admired were several dishes of ripe strawberries, with which the Cardinal was highly pleased, and said that such ripe strawberries would be a rarity even in Italy at that time.

The King was so pleased, that he immediately knighted Julius in the presence of his Nobles, and changed his surname, calling him *de Fraize*, which was afterwards changed to Fraizeau and Frasil. He had four sons, two of whom the King takes to his service, and, as the King changed his name, he gave him the fraises, or strawberries, for his armorial bearings.

This gentleman was descended of the Bitoriges, in the division of old Gaul*: from him issued a numerous offspring. Thaddeo, one of his sons, was governor of St Denis; and his son, Alexander, was

* The language of Brittany, the coast of Cornwall, and of Wales, is a dialect of the Gaelic.

Bishop of Amiens, in the time of Robert, the first of the Capetian race, and was one of the boldest churchmen in France, and reckoned 200 Frasers in France in his time.

Mr James Fraser of Phopachy, in his travels, says, one Michael Maule, a merchant in Diep, whose mother was a Fraser, gave Dr Alexander Fraser, (who was afterwards physician to King Charles II,) in his hearing, in the year 1657, much the same account with the above, of the origin of the Frasers; and added, that one of them, Jacimo Fraser, sub-marshal, had a great estate at Longovil, in Normandy, where he saw the arms of the Frasers in an oval shield over the gate of the palace. Mr Maule declared, that there were 150 Frasers at that time in Britany and Normandy; and that Duke Fulero of Guise acknowledged, that he was lineally descended of Piere, or Peter, one of the sons of Julian, so called from being born in St Peter's Eve.

The family of greatest note of them that were lately in France, is that of Frezeau, or Frezel, Duke de la Frezeliere, and Marquis de Montagnard, Hereditary Lieutenant General of the Ordinance in France, who, upon account of their being of the same stock and name, was the great patron of Simon, Lord Fraser of Lovat, during his stay in France from the year 1703 till 1714.

There are several Frasers and Frissals in England, who give out that their ancestors came over from Normandy with William the Conqueror: "In the year 1657," says the above traveller, "when I was at London, I got acquainted with Mr Thomas Frysell, minister of the gospel at Clun, in Shropshire, who told me his predecessors came over with the Conqueror; that his own name was Fraser, but by the vulgar dialect of Shropshire, where they lived, they called him Frysell."

At the court of King Malcolm flourished the three brothers, John, Alexander, and Francis, who attended King Malcolm in all his wars*.

John, the eldest brother, married Margaret Sloan, an heiress in Tweedale, by whom he got a considerable estate. The King gave Alexander lands about Innerkeithing, and kept the third, Francis, who was an expert swordsman, musician and poet, in his Court.

The Gaelic and Latin were the only languages spoke at Court, till that time. But King Malcolm introduced the English and French. This Francis was master of that language, and, therefore, commonly called *Frishalach Francach*. He was also a poet,

* These having been educated in France, according to the fashion of those times, the Highlanders called them Francach on their return to Scotland.

musician, and expert swordsman, which made him most acceptable to King Malcolm, who kept him always at Court as Captain of his guard, and, understanding architecture, ordered him to give plans for embellishing the Abbays at Dunfermline and Arbroath.

John Fraser attended King Malcolm in his expedition North; and was with him when he was treacherously killed at the siege of Alnwick, in the year 1093 *, and was afterwards Chancellor to King Alexander I. having flourished from 1060 to 1112; whilst his brother, Sir Alexander, Lord of Inverkeithing, and all the adjacent lands, as far as the Queensferry, was *Custos Curia*, and Lord Chamberlain of Scotland; his residence was at Dunfrisil †.

By Margaret Sloan he had issue,—Simon, his eldest son and heir:—Andrew, ancestor to the Lord Fraser of Muchat:—James of Peebles; and two daughters,—Sophia, married to Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March: and Flora, to Warren Graham in the Merse.

His eldest son, Simon, married Margaret, the eldest daughter of Walter, first Great Steward of Scotland, grandson to Bancho, the famous Thane of Loch-

* Memoirs of the Family of Lovat.

† Now Dunbrusall.

aber, the direct and immediate ancestor of our Kings of the Steward line *.

By this noble and illustrious alliance, Sir Simon had several sons, of whom Simon seems to be the eldest, and appears, from authentic vouchers, to have been contemporary with King David and his grandson, and his immediate successor, King Malcolm the Fourth, commonly called the Maiden.

Bernard was the second brother, and carried down the succession in this noble family.

Nessius, a third son of Sir Simon's, took another name, either from his patrimonial lands, or for some other reason ; so that his posterity were swallowed up in other names. He calls himself Nessius de Lundin, in ancient deeds †.

A fourth son of Sir Simon was Kelvert, who, from undeniable and authentic vouchers, is the well-known branch of the Frasers of Drumelzier ‡. Kelvert's son was Oliver, who was succeeded by his nephew, Adam, who carried the surname of Fraser, and is a benefactor to the Abbey and Convent of Newbottle out of the lands of Hale ||, part of which Bernard Fraser had evicted from Maria de Hale, the sister of Oliver.

* Simson. Abercromby. Crawford. Genealogy of the Stuarts.

† Chartulary of Newbottle. Torry and Lundin Fifeshire.

‡ Chartulary of Newbottle.

|| Chartulary of Newbottle.

Adam Fraser was succeeded by his son, Laurence Fraser, who is designed *Dominus de Drumelzier*, Laird of Drumelzier *, and is a donator out of his estate to the religious of the Abbey of Melross.

The heir female of this branch of the Frasers, went by marriage to another family of the name of Tweedie, who were for many years a flourishing family in Tweedale, and were allied with the best families in the South.

Fraser of Fruid was a son of Drumelzier.

Sir Simon, the second of that name, whom Alexander the First continued Constable of Oliver Castle, lived much at Court in the reigns of the two brothers, King Alexander the First, and King David †.

Somerled, or Somherl, Thane of Argyle, taking advantage of the distress the kingdom was reduced to by an extreme famine, and, in the minority of Malcolm the Fourth, raised an army, and intended no less than to usurp the crown. At the same time, Donald, the son of Malcom Macbeth, made an insurrection in Galloway, with a design to embroil the kingdom *.

When Gilchrist Ogilbluee, Thane of Angus, was sent against Somerhell, and reduced him, and obliged

* Great Chartulary of Melross, in the Earl of Haddington's custody.

† MSS. Memoirs of Lovat.

‡ Ibid and Major and Dempster.

|| MSS Memoirs.

him to fly into Ireland, Patrick Dunbar, earl of March, and his two brothers-in-law, Simon and Bernard Fraser, reduced Macbeth, and brought him prisoner to the King. In this expedition, Sir Simon received the wounds of which he soon after died, to the great regret of his Royal master.

This Simon, the second of that name, and third Lord or Laird of Tweeddale, and Constable of Oliver Castle, married Anna Flava, or M'Fla, half-sister to Queen Sybilla, who was daughter to King Henry I. of England.

There are authentic vouchers still extant, to prove, that both these brothers, Sir Simon and Bernard, were in a very high degree of favour with the Kings under whom they lived; for no less than the King and Queen are witnesses to different donations made by them to the religious at that time.

We find this Simon II. grants to the monks of Kelso the church of Keith, with certain woods of lands adjacent thereto, together with privileges of fuel and pasture, and freedom from multures of services, *molendini et stagni* *. This donation being very far back, contains several singular clauses, which illustrate the time in which it was granted.

This donation is confirmed by King Malcolm the Fourth; so that we may reasonably enough con-

* Chartulary of Kelso in the Advocates Library of Edinburgh.

clude, that since he makes so considerable a donation out of the lands of Keith, and grants a freedom from all services, that it is highly probable he was superior to the whole barony.

He had no male issue, at least he had none that came to maturity. He left a daughter, Adda, who was married to a gentleman of rank and quality, named Hugh Lorrens, who got the lands of Keith with this lady, and they, with assent and consent, confirm the donation by Simon Fraser, their father *.

The daughter and heiress of Hugh de Lorrence, and Adda Fraser, was married to Hervey, the son of Philip Marshal, father to Sir John Keith, the lineal ancestor of the illustrious family of the Earls Marishal of Scotland, and had for her portion the lands in Aberdeenshire, and the Mearns, which the families of Marishall, and house of Gordon, and Lord Forbes of Pitsligo, by marriage with these, have enjoyed ever since, quartering the arms of Fraser.

This Herveus Mariscallus confirms the donation of Simon Fraser to the monks of Kelso, and they obtain a charter from King Alexander II. ratifying (*donationem, &c.*) the donation of Simon Fraser to the monks of the church of Keith, with all the land and wood south of the burn that runs near the said

* Chartulary of Kelso.

church, in a straight division, contained in the confirmation of Hervey, the son of Philip Marshall.

Sir George Mackenzie's account is as follows :

“ Lord Fraser's daughter was married to Keith, predecessor to the Earl Marishall, by whom she had a daughter married to Alexander, first Earl of Huntly ; but because that Lord Keith's lady was not served heir to her father, the Earl of Huntly caused serve his lady heir to her grandfather, which occasioned many debates betwixt these two houses ; but, in the end, both submitted to the Pope, who decerned the Earl Marishall to possess the lands of Fittaresso, Dalpersæ, Kintore, &c. and the Earl of Huntly the lands of Aboyne, Glentanet, Glenlivet, Tillibody, &c.”

We may here remark, that it naturally enough occurs, how came the Frasers possessed of so many lands in this part of Scotland ? This we are enabled to prove, from the late discoveries made in England by the researches of the liberal and learned Mr Astell, and the indefatigable and judicious Mr Robertson, keeper of the records in Scotland, in an elegant and well-arranged public depository, which, together with many useful papers recovered, his country owes to the magnanimity and patriotism of Lord Frederick Campbell, Lord Register.

The following is an Account of the Charters alluded to.

- Charter to Alexander Fraser, of the lands of Garvocks.
 ——— to ditto, of Strathearn, Essuly, &c.
 ——— to ditto, of Panbryde.
 ——— to Simon Fraser, of Brothertoun, and lands in Inver-
 bervie, which belonged to Edmond Haistings.
 ——— to Alexander Fraser, of Culpressack.

N. B. The above five seem to have been granted about the year 1309; but the particular dates are not set down in the index.

Record preserved in the Register Office, Edinburgh; Catalogue, by Robertson, page 19, No. 105. “*Mariæ sponsæ Alexandri Fraser militis, sorori nostri dilecti et Johanni Campbeli, filio suo nepoti nostri suo homagio et servitio omnes terras e tenementis que fuerint Davidis Comitis Atholiæ, in Comitatu Athole quas eodem David foris fecit.*”

- Charter to Alexander Fraser, lands of Tulch-Fraser, about 1320.
 ——— to Alexander Fraser of Cluny, of the lands of Clardney, and fishings in the loch of Skene, about 1321.
 ——— to Alexander Fraser, of the barony of Kinnaird in Aberdeenshire, about the same time.
 ——— to Alexander Fraser, lands of Auchincairny, in Kincardineshire, about 1321.

Charter to Alexander Fraser, lands and forest of Craigie, in the thanedom of Collie, about 1321.

—— to John Fraser, of the thanedom of Arbuthnot, in Kincardineshire, about 1321.

—— to Alexander Fraser, of the thanedom of Collie, &c.

—— to Alexander Fraser, an annual rent out of Pendrochie, in Stirlingshire. All the above by Robt. I.

Deed by Alexander Fraser, in relation to the lands of Duffus, thanedom of Cluny to the Fraser, Dav. II.

Charter to Alexander Fraser, of the sheriffship of Aberdeen, by King David II.

—— to William Fraser, and Margaret Murray his wife, of the thanedom of Durris and Collie, the last of which belonged to Alexander Fraser, the father of said William, by David II.

—— to Mr Fraser, of the thanedom of Durris, by Dav. II.

—— by William Keith, Mareschall, “ who married Margaret Fraser, air to Fraser of Stratherhin, of the lands of Knoe and Galathan, in the barony of Stratherhin.”

—— to Duncan Fraser, of the lands of Brounemoky, Mullbyne, &c. David II. 1367.

—— to Alexander Fraser, thanedom of Durris, 1360.

—— to John Fraser, son of William, of the lands of Wester Esyntoly, 1374.

—— to James Fraser, an annual rent out of Carnousie and Old Mesil, in the barony of Frendraught, King Robert II.

—— by James Fraser of Frendraught, to the White Friars of Aberdeen, time of Robert III.

—— by Walter Leslie, Earl of Ross, to Alexander Fraser time of King Robert III.

Charter to Alexander Fraser, and Elizabeth Keith his wife,
of the lands of Kinnell, in Forfarshire, by the Re-
gent Albany, about 1407.

“ Querela Margaretæ Corbet Sponsæ quondam Domini Gil-
berti Fraser facta regi, quod maritus suus interfectus.”

“ Querela Simonis Fraser et Margaretæ sponsæ suæ super
vicecomite de Inverness.”

These two about 1328.

“ Querela Simonis Fraser et Margaretæ sponsæ et unius hæ-
redis Comitis de Caitness super Comitatu de Caitnes
apud Kinross : 4th Decembris 1330.”

Malcolm II.	Began to Reign, 1004	Reigned, 30
Duncan.	———— 1034	—— 6
Macbeth.	———— 1040	—— 17
Malcolm III.	———— 1057	—— 36
Donald VII.	———— 1093	—— 1
Duncan II.	———— 1094	—— 2
Edgar.	———— 1098	—— 9
Alexander I.	———— 1107	—— 17
David I.	———— 1124	—— 29
Malcolm IV.	———— 1153	—— 12
William I.	———— 1165	—— 49
Alexander II.	———— 1214	—— 35
Alexander III.	———— 1249	—— 36
Interregnum.	———— 1285	—— 7
John Baliol.	———— 1292	—— 14
Robert I.	———— 1306	——

SIR SIMON FRASER dying without issue male, was succeeded in the estate of Tweedale by his brother, Bernard Fraser. He is witness to several charters of his brother-in-law, Patrick, Earl of March, together with Patrick and William, the Earl's sons, to the monks of Newbottle* ; and Bernard Fraser does himself grant a mortification to the monks of Newbottle, for the safety of his own soul and the souls of his predecessors, before these witnesses, (*Domino Rege Alexandro,*) King Alexander, and William Bondingtoun, Chancellor of Scotland ; Nessius my brother, and others.

By another charter, he confirms to these monks two donations, one made by his brother, Nessius de Lunden, and another by his nephew, Nessius, the son of Nessius, which he had granted to them, *anno* 1204 ; and the witnesses to the confirmation are, (*Domina Emergerda Regina Scotorum, &c.*) Emergerda, Queen of Scots ; Patrick, Earl of March, and others†. Likewise a charter to Newbottle, of the lands of Miln-Hale, which he had evicted from Mary de Hale, who pretended a right to them, as being daughter to his brother Kelvert.

This great man, Bernard Fraser, continued at the head of his family, from the time of Malcolm IV. till

* Chartulary of Kelso and Newbottle.

† Chartulary of Newbottle.

the reign of Alexander II. ; in the beginning of whose reign he was high sheriff of the county of Stirling ; an honour which continued in his family a considerable time*. He accompanied King William to York, where he had a meeting with King John of England. He was likewise one of the Barons, or *Magnates Scotiæ*, as they are promiscuously called, who swore to the peace agreed on betwixt King Alexander of Scotland and Henry III. of England, at York, by the mediation of Otho, the Cardinal Legate, and who subjected themselves with the King to the jurisdiction of the Pope, if they should at any time go against that oath†. The other guarantees of the peace, on the part of Scotland, were Comes Malcolmus, the Earl of Fife ; *Walterius filius Alani*, Walter, the son of Alan, the Great Steward of Scotland, and most of the Earls and great Barons in the kingdom ; nor are we to pass over that he is a frequent witness to charters granted by King Alexander II. to the monks of Newbottle, Cambuskenneth, and other religious persons and places.

Bernard Fraser married Mary Ogilbhui ‡, daughter to the great Gilchrist, Thane of Angus, by Marjory, sister to King Malcolm IV. and King William the Lyon, and daughter to Prince Henry ||. The eldest

* Chartulary of Cambuskenneth in the Advocates Library.

† Rymer's *Fædera*, Tom. I. p. 373.

‡ *O-gil-bhui*, or nephew of the yellow-haired laddie.

|| Memoirs of the House of Lovat, MSS.

daughter, according to our historians, was married to Conan, Duke of Britany, of whom the house of Bourbon is descended ; and the second daughter to Florance, Earl of Holland, of whom the house of Austria is come *.

By this illustrious lady, Bernard Fraser had four sons, all worthy of their high birth, Sir Simon, Sir Andrew, Sir Gilbert, and William ; and two daughters, Fenella, the eldest, married to Sir Colin Campbell of Lochow ; the second, Helen, lived a nun in the priory of Coldinghame. Bernard Fraser, and his son Simon, attended King Alexander to York, where Bernard died of a malignant fever, about the year 1210, and was succeeded in his great estate by his oldest son,

Simon, third of that name†, and fifth Lord or Laird of Tweeddale or Oliver Castle. He was one of the nobility who went commissioners to renew the ancient league, and who conveyed from France Mary, King Alexander's second queen, married at Roxburgh 1259. He, and Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March, defeated Somherl, the son of the former Somerled,

* Genealogy of the Stewarts, p. 13.

† It is necessary here to remark, that the names John and Simon are alternately applied by different chroniclers to the first Lord Fraser of Tweeddale, son to Thane Oliver, who built the castle bearing his name in Tweedsmuir ; and the succession stands thus : Oliver,—John or Simon, of Tweeddale, Simon II.—Bernard, of Tweeddale and Oliver castle,—and Simon III. fifth lord of Tweeddale and Oliver castle.

who made an insurrection in Argyleshire. John Major falsely calls him John Fraser.

This Sir Simon is in many authentic records called *pater*, father, to distinguish him from his son, who was cotemporary with him, and is commonly called *filius*, son.

This Sir Simon, the father, was much at court during the reign of King Alexander the Second, by whom he was made high sheriff of the county of Tweeddale: We have authentic evidence of his enjoying his office in the beginning of the reign of Alexander the Third *.

King Alexander the Second, intending to go in pilgrimage to Jona or Icolmkill, was accompanied by Sir Simon in his journey, and never left him in his sickness at the island of Bernera, where the king died after his return from Icolmkill; and was one of those who conveyed the king's body, without ever leaving him, till he was solemnly interred at Melross, according to his own desire †.

Though the Cumings ruled all at court at this time, yet Sir Simon continued in a great degree of favour with the queen dowager in the minority of Alexander the Third, both on account of his relation to her royal husband, and his constant attendance on him in his last sickness, and that he was one of those

* Chartulary of Kelso, ad. an. 1266.

† Memoirs of the House of Lovat, MSS.

who conveyed her from France to Scotland. He continued at court till the young king was crowned*.

He is one of the great barons of the kingdom of Scotland, who, upon the death of Bruce Alexander of Scotland, son to King Alexander III. *anno* 1283, obliged themselves, by a solemn writ, to receive and acknowledge the king's grandchild Margaret, called the Maid of Norroway, and of Margaret of Scotland, only daughter of King Alexander, as heir to the crown, on the decease of the king her grandfather †, without issue male of his own body.

Sir Simon, the father, was one of the great barons of the kingdom, who, in name of the community of Scotland, and in conjunction with the guardians, prelates, and other barons of the kingdom, wrote a letter to King Edward I. of England, in the year 1289, about marrying the young queen of Scotland, the maid of Norroway, to Prince Edward his son ‡.

This Sir Simon, with his whole family, which, by the bye, was then pretty numerous, maintained the title and right of succession of the Lord John Baliol, till it was basely and meanly surrendered by himself. One thing that shews the great power and weight of that family at that time is, that Sir Simon Fraser, with his brothers, William, archbishop of St Andrew's, Sir Andrew Fraser, and his cousin, Sir Richard Fraser,

* Memoirs of the House of Lovat, MSS.

† Rymer's *Fœdera*.

‡ Rymer's *Fœdera*, Vol. I. p. 374.

were four of the auditors named on the part of Baliol, to join with King Edward I. to determine the right of the several competitors for the crown, the 5th June 1291 *.

On the 12th of the same month, Sir Simon, with many others of the Scots nobles, swore fealty to the king of England, at Nortram †.

He also mortifies to the monks of Kelso, the lands of South Kingledoors, with the chapel of St Cuthbert's of Kingledoors, with the lands of Hopearthane.

This Sir Simon was first married to Grizzle, daughter to the thane of Galloway, by whom he had two daughters; and, by a second marriage, two sons, every way worthy of their illustrious father; namely, Sir Simon, ancestor to the Lord Fraser of Lovat, and Sir Alexander, from whom the Frasers of Salton are lineally descended; and the Frasers of Salton having since succeeded to the ancient barony of Abernethy, which descends to heirs whatsoever, are styled Lords Salton.

Sir Simon, of whom we are speaking, obtained a right from King Alexander III. of the lordship of *Loveth, vulgo Morich*, in the Aird, since called *Aird Muck-Shimmy*, of which charter the following is a copy :

* Rymer's Fædera, Vol. I. p. 374.

† Ibid.

“ Alexander Dei Gratia Rex Scotorum omnibus probis
 “ hominibus terræ suæ clericis et laicis Baron. Just. vice-
 “ com. propositis presentibus et futuris Salutem sciatis me
 “ dedisse et hac presenti charta confirmasse Dno Simoni
 “ Fraserio militi et heredibus suis de me et heredibus meis
 “ in perpetuum totas et integras terras de Loveth, vulgo
 “ Morvick tenend. in hereditate per antiquas divisas suas cum
 “ omnibus suis rectitudinibus et demandis quæ ad dictam
 “ terram de Morvick in aliquo tempore ad me pert. vel meis
 “ heredibus possunt demandari et etiam cum omnibus suis
 “ pertinentibus partibus et assiamantis quibuscunq. accomo-
 “ datis aut quæ de jure in aliquo tempore pertinere potuis-
 “ sent in bosco et plano in pratis et pascuis et pasturis in
 “ moris et morescis in aquis et stagnis in piscariis et molen-
 “ dinis in focis et avibus in forestis et montibus &c. ita libere
 “ et quiete plenarie et honorifice sicut alii milites quicunq. li-
 “ berius quietius et honoroficius in aliquo tempore possedunt
 “ vel tenere possunt nos insuper et successores nostri dictam
 “ terram de Loveth dicto Simoni Fraserio et heredibus suis
 “ contra omnes homines et terras warrantabimus et perpe-
 “ tuo defendeamus in cujus rei testimonium et prob. hoc
 “ nostrum donum regium est signatum et sigillum nostrum
 “ est etiam apensum coram hisce Test. Duncano Comes de
 “ Fyfa Gilb. Abba de Dunfermline Jacomo Capellano meo
 “ Thoma Forfax Angusio Camerario et multis aliis apud
 “ Dunfermline in anno Gratiæ 1253.”

It is well known, that before the days of King Ro-
 bert de Bruce, in consequence of the losses by conti-
 nual warfare, estates in land were usually provided in
 marriage settlements to heirs whatever, and even the

heirs female of a former marriage, with an heiress, were sometimes preferred by special provision to the heirs male of a subsequent marriage. Now, whether it was that his sons, Sir Simon and Sir Alexander, were provided with large estates in the north, or by reason of any special contract of his first marriage, it is certain the greatest part of the Tweeddale estates of Sir Simon, the father, descended in the family of his two daughters, the eldest of whom married Sir Hugh Hay of Locherratt, of whom are descended the Lords of Yester, and the Earls and Marquisses of Tweeddale. The other daughter was married to Sir Patrick Fleming of Biggar, the right ancestor of the Lord Fleming, and Earls of Wigton; wherefore those families carry the coat armour of the Frasers, and wear their livery to this day, which happens to be the national colours of Scotland, blue and white*. Sir Simon Fraser, the father, who was

* His grace the present Duke of Queensberry has very handsomely repaired the ancient gate of Nidpath Castle, in Tweeddale, where the Fraser arms are sculptured. It is quite uncertain when, or by whom, this castle was built. In former ages, when considered as an impregnable fortress, opposed to the frequent incursions, and sudden attacks of a powerful neighbouring nation, the possession of it was considered as a matter of no small importance.

The Frasers' arms over the gate, still perfectly entire, well cut in free-stone, prove it to have been built by that family, though we cannot ascertain the date. This much is certain, that about the year 1240 it was the residence of two sisters (the Ladies Fraser), who built the bridge of Peebles; and married, the one Hay, and the

the last Lord or Laird of Tweeddale and Oliver Castle, and the first of Loveth, died in the year 1299 ; his two daughters having most of great south country estates, and his two sons, Sir Simon and Sir Alexander, being amply provided, by the bounty of their sovereign, in northern estates, in the shire of Inverness, Aberdeen, and Kincardine, before their father's death.

Having spoken of the Fraser's settlement in the north, and getting possession of the barony of Lovat, it is both just and necessary to mention the ancient proprietors of that estate, and how it came to be transmitted to the family of the Frasers.

Other Fleeming, ancestors of the Marquis of Tweeddale and Earl of Wigton.

Thus, from the Frasers, lords of Oliver Castle, it came into the possession of the Hays, Marquisses of Tweeddale, and was by them afterwards sold to William, first Duke of Queensberry, who bought it in 1678 for his second son, the first Earl of March.

This ancient castle held out against Cromwell longer than any other place south of the Forth. It is seated on a rock, on the north side of the Tweed, about a mile above the town of Peebles. The following inscription, transcribed from a pane of glass in one of its windows, is supposed to have been written by one of those heroes who so bravely defended it :

Firm on a rock this castle stands ;
Nor heeds the lapse of time,
More than its river, gliding past,
In majesty sublime.
While cities crumble into dust,
And empires fade away,
It frowns defiance on its foes,
The beings of a day.

About the year 1244, while King Alexander the Second, and a great number of his nobility, lay at Haddington, the lodging of Patrick Cuming, Earl of Athole, took fire on a sudden, in which the earl and two servants were burnt to death; though it was not known how the fire began, yet a general suspicion ran against the Bissets, upon account of a standing feud betwixt the earl and them: They were accordingly summoned to appear to answer for that murder; and such was the great power and interest of the Cumings, that though William Bisset, the chief of the Bissets, proved, by many witnesses, among whom was the queen, that he was at Forfar, upwards of 60 miles from Haddington, the night that that villainy was perpetrated; yet the Cumings insisted that several of his servants and vassals were seen there; upon which the whole family was banished, and their estates confiscated to the king*.

But besides the above account given by our historians of the banishment and forfeiting of the Bissets, John Major adds, that John Bisset had met with the same fate, though for a different cause. The king being informed that John Bisset had entered into a league with M'Donald of the Isles; that he had done him homage, and received a charter from him, he ordered the Earl of Ross to apprehend and imprison

* Major, lib. 4. Buch, lib. 7.

him in the castle of Inverness, till he transported him to Edinburgh.

Bisset having got intelligence of this order, made his escape, in the most private manner, to his lands of Auchterless, in Banffshire, where he remained in great obscurity for a year, till his neighbour, John Dempster of Muros, understanding that there was a price put on his head, he got some armed men together, and seized John Bisset, in the wood of Achterless, and carried him from shire to shire to Kirkaldy, where he received his reward.

John Bisset being convicted, was banished, and his estate confiscated. The charter from Donald M'Donald, who styles himself King of the Isles, is in the following words :

“ Ego Donaldus Insularum Rex, tenore presentium, do
 “ dono, et concedo amico nostro dignissimo Domino Iohan-
 “ ni Bisset D. de J. totas et integras terras de Achterless et
 “ Moncoffer, cum omnibus ad eas pertinentibus tam infra
 “ quam supra terram hacce in provincia Bancæ jacentes
 “ idq. sibi et suis successoribus in perpetuum, chartamq.
 “ hanc firmam et stabilem iis teneamur, quam nostro sigillo
 “ et chirographo confirmamus et attestamus, apud castrum
 “ nostrum de Dingwall coram consaguineis et consiliariis
 “ nostris charissimis M'Leod de Lewis, et M'Leod de Ha-
 “ rise, die decimo Nono Idus Jan. anno a Christo nato
 “ M.CC.XLV, anno pontificatus S. D. N. Gregory IX. P
 “ O. M. primo, Pontificis Optimi Maxime, S. M. P.”

Sir John Bisset being thus banished, and his great estate confiscated, the Barony of Loveth was the gift of the King to Sir Simon Fraser of Tweeddale, who, long before his death, made over the rights of it to his son Sir Simon, though I do not find that any of them designed themselves of Loveth.

And, though Sir John Bisset is called, in ancient writes, Dominus, Laird of Loveth; yet, I find, in his time, David Graham was constable of the Fort of Loveth, so designed of Loveth in the Chartulary of Murray, where there is mention of a controversy betwixt Andrew, Bishop of Murray, and David Graham of Loveth, about the Ess, the river Forms, at Kiltarlaty, signed by the Bishop and Chapter, at Spyney *anno* 1242, which was four or five years, at least, before Sir John Bisset was banished.

Thomas de Fenton was constable of Beaufort*. There were several other gentlemen who were possessed of small interests in the Aird, commonly called the Bisset's Barons; such as M'Gilandrish of Moniak, Corbat of Drumchardney, Chrysty of Foyness, Haliburton of Culbriny. The Macra's, a brave and numerous clan, inhabited the Clunes Oberichan, Urquhart, and Achmony†.

* Memoirs of the house of Lovat, MSS.

† Loveth and Beaufort were both forts of the Crown, to which

Though all our historians agree, with respect to the time of the fall of the great family of the Bissets, as above related ; yet we have authentic evidences, that Bisset of Lovat's daughters shared a considerable part of their father's estate among them, though not the whole.

Sir Simon Fraser, to silence all disputes, married Mary, the eldest. William de Fenton, who, in some writes, is called Lord of that ilk, and in others Laird, *i. e.* Lord of Beaufort, married Cecilia, another daughter, and had some part of her father's estate with her.

David Graham, above-mentioned, married Margaret, another of Sir John Bisset's daughters. Another of them, Elizabeth, was married to Andrew de Bosco of Redcastle, in Ross-shire*.

There is a deed, dated 1295, granted by Elizabeth Bisset, as she designs herself, *filia nobilis viri Johannis de Bisset, ac sponsa quondam Domini Andree de Bosco* ; that is, daughter to the nobleman John de Bisset, and spouse once of Andrew de Bosco. By this deed, she disposes to Mary de Bosco, her daughter, and to Hugh Rose, her husband, the lands of Kilravock †.

the King appointed Governors, though the profits of the lands belonged to great Barons by charter.

* Memoirs of the House of Lovat, MSS.

† *Charta penes Kilravock.*

But, to return to Sir Simon Fraser, the son. He was not inferior to his noble father, in virtue, honour, conduct and bravery, though, by his father's settlement on the children of his first marriage, he was denuded of the far greatest part of his paternal estate in the south. He was in possession of a considerable estate, and great following, in the north; and there are authentic documents to prove, that he was in possession of some part of his paternal estate in the south; for *Ille Dominus Simon Fraser, miles, filius quondam Domini Simonis Fraser, militis*, ratifies and confirms his father Sir Simon's donation to the monks of Melrose; adding further to them, by a new deed of his own, free ish and entry for their cattle, through certain lands he had from Laurentius Fraser, Laird of Drumelzier; to which deed there is, besides other witnesses, his cousin Andreus Fraser, Miles.

He grants, likewise, to the same monastery, a road for their carriages through his lands of Hoprew, to which his cousin, Sir Andrew Fraser, before mentioned, is also a witness.

Sir Simon is one of those glorious patriots, whose memory is so highly extolled by our historians, both ancient and modern. Dr Abercromby writes a short sketch of his life.

This gallant man, with his father and friends, adhered closely to the interest of King John Baliol, till it was basely betrayed and deserted by himself. And

when King Edward the First subdued the kingdom in 1296, Sir Simon behaved as became a true hearted patriot, on that fatal occasion ; for we find he was one of those whom King Edward, not venturing to trust at home, thought fit to carry along with him to England, where he continued close prisoner for eight months, and was not liberated till June, 1297, when he and his cousin, Sir Richard Fraser, did, in imitation of all others in the same circumstances submit to the Conqueror *, and acknowledge him their Sovereign Lord, and promise, upon having obtained permission to return to Scotland, that they should stay no longer there, than was necessary to equip themselves, in order to attend that monarch in his designed expedition against France ; and that, if they failed in this, they declared themselves willing that their persons, wives, families, and all they had in the world, should be at his mercy.

But it is certain, they did fail : nor did any Scotsman in these days believe, that forced obligations were binding in conscience ; on the contrary, the best of them were the foremost to break through these oaths they thought more sinful to keep than to take †.

Sir Simon was one of those, who, upon his return

* Rymer's *Fœdera*, Tom. iii. p. 769. Abercromby, &c.

† Abercromby's *Martial Atchievements*.

to Scotland, joined the guardian, Sir William Wallace, maternally descended of his family, who gave many proofs of his zeal for his country, and loyalty to his king, and of his own merits and parts. For when Sir William Wallace, in a full assembly of the nobles at Perth, laid down his double commission of General of the army and guardian of the kingdom ; and Sir John Cumine of Badenoch, Wallace's greatest enemy, was chosen guardian, because of his near relation to the Crown—Sir Simon Fraser was thought fittest, after Wallace, to command the Scots army, and accordingly was chosen General by the Guardian and the states. He had been always a faithful adherent of Sir William Wallace, nor could the guardian have a fitter or more proper colleague ; witness the ever-memorable victory gained at Roslin over Ralph Comfray, King Edward's Treasurer, and one of the chief commanders of his armies.

In summer, 1302, two different armies were sent into Scotland, the one commanded by King Edward in person, the other, by the Prince of Wales, his son ; but the Scots could not be brought to a general engagement, but contented themselves with interrupting the English convoys, and cutting off parties of their men ; so that that campaign was spent in doing nothing †.

† Abercromby.

In the meantime, a truce was agreed upon till the 30th of November, which was afterwards prolonged till Easter, 1303. But the English general broke the truce, and thinking to surprise the nation, secure and defenceless, by reason of the truce, he passed the borders, in February, at the head of 30,000 men, all well-armed, and, for the most part, mounted, for their greater expedition, on blood-horses *. They met with no opposition on their march ; and, therefore, for the convenience of forage, and that they might harass the country, and do the greater mischief by ranging at large, they divided into three bodies, and so, on the 24th of that month, advanced to Roslin, five miles off Edinburgh, where they encamped at considerable distance from one another.

BATTLE OF ROSLIN,

25th February, 1303, O. S.

The Scots generals, Sir John Cumine and Sir Simon Fraser, upon advice of their approach, made haste to draw together all the forces they could raise ; and these amounted to no more than eight, or, at most, ten thousand men. Nevertheless, with these few they marched in one night near sixteen miles, from Biggar to Roslin, with a design to fall unawares on the enemy's camp.

* Boethius, Buchanan, Major, Abercromby.

This they executed with great vigour and courage; and falling on the enemy, they very soon killed, took prisoners, or drove all that were in that camp back on the second, where the alarm being given, every one drew to their arms, marched in haste, and came in view of the victorious Scots, as they were dividing the plunder and prisoners; and now they found they must renew the fight with a fresh body of men, and those more numerous than the former they had already defeated.

They expressed by their countenances no great inclination to the work; but their officers, with short harangues, roused up their courage; and having armed such of their own number as wanted, with the arms of their prisoners, a second engagement ensued immediately, and a very fierce one it was, in which the Scots had soon the advantage of the enemy; and having laid by their arms and head-pieces, were refreshing their fatigued and wearied bodies, and making ready some to eat and some to sleep, when a third army appears at no great distance. What shall they do? If they fly they must lose their double victory, their great booty, and probably be overtaken and trodden down by the avenging enemy, who, being all well mounted, would thereby be encouraged to pursue them.

Their brave and undaunted officers went again among their ranks, and encouraged them by all the

persuasion they could devise, to stand their ground to the last, and begged they would but once more show their faces to men they had already twice defeated, and who, terrified with their amazing resolution, would not dare to stand their attack a third time.

Animated with these hopes, mounted on their enemy's horses, and armed with their arms, the Scots attacked, fought a third battle, and entirely routed a third body of men, equal, if not superior, in number to themselves ; an effort of valour not to be paralleled in history.

The fame of this glorious victory was not confined to Scotland or England ; it flew beyond sea also, and was talked of and admired all over Europe. The Scots ambassadors at Paris give a remarkable account of it, and of the fame of the generals, in a letter at the time, which the curious may see at large in M. Rymer's excellent collections. In this letter they give their constituents an account, " that a perpetual peace was at last concluded and sworn to by the kings of France and England, in which the Scots were not comprehended. They exhorted their countrymen, however, not to despair, but to shew themselves more than ever men of resolution and courage." And then add these remarkable words, "That did the Scots but know how much their valour was celebrated over all the different climates of the world, upon



account of their last engagement, they would certainly be overjoyed, and encouraged to outdo themselves *."

Though no doubt both generals acted their parts very well, yet considering Sir John Cumine's unhandsome behaviour at Falkirk, and how easily he was brought next year to submit to such terms as King Edward was pleased to impose on him and the nation; and comparing with it the steady and uniform conduct of Sir Simon Fraser, not only when in the supreme command with Sir John Cumine, but likewise when he acted under Sir William Wallace, before his advancement, and under Sir Robert the Bruce, after it, we may very well give credit to what the *Scotochronicon* relates †, that Sir Simon was not only the main instrument in gaining this memorable battle, but in keeping the guardian to his duty during the four years of his administration. And indeed all our historians extol Sir Simon Fraser to the very skies, as the glory and ornament of his country. Fordun calls him Simon Fraser *bellicosus omne bonitate præditus*. Mr Winton says he was manly, stout, bald, and wight.

I know Buchanan calls him John, which must have been owing to inadvertancy rather than ignorance; for not only do all our Scots authors call him Simon,

* *Fœdera Antiq.* Tom. II. page 929. and 930.

† *Lib.* 12. cap. 1. Abercromby, and other historians.

but Buchanan himself, in a page or two afterwards, calls him Simon Fraser, who was apprehended with Walter Logan ; and Rymer's excellent collections puts the matter out of doubt. But it may appear of greater moment that he calls him the most powerful man in all Tweeddale. Even this cannot be reckoned a very great mistake, for his father was so ; and the son had still greater interest there, as is evident from what is above related, though his principal settlement was in the north.

Mr Johnston, in his *Heroes Scotiæ*, thus celebrates the Battle of Roslin :

Tres validæ institerant acres violentibus armis
 Ducis, nec fulminea sunt satis arma Jovis.
 Procubuerunt tantum victu virtute duorum.
 Una acres victas tres dedit, una dies,
 Urbibus impositos hostes, ac molibus altis,
 Ejicient duri reliquiasque jube
 Macti animis non sic Romanis pellitur armis
 Annibal hinc flevit perditæ Roma suos.

The mighty King Edward was highly provoked and affronted at this defeat of his army at Roslin, which happened the 25th of February, 1302, or, according to the style now used, 1303. He therefore entered Scotland in May following, at the head of such an army of English, Irish, Welsh, Gascons, and some unnatural Scots, as none durst oppose in the open

field *. Most part of the nation betook themselves to strong castles and inaccessible mountains, while King Edward penetrated through the whole country as far as Caithness, which was then the utmost limits of Scotland ; for the islands of Orkney were then in the hands of the Norwegians †.

In his progress north, after demolishing the castles of Elgin, Forres, Nairn, and Inverness, he marched through the Aird, where Sir Simon's northern estate lay, and laid it waste, meeting with no opposition till he came to the strong castle of Downey or Beaufort, to which he laid a regular siege, and, by throwing stones by catapultæ, from trenches still to be seen at 700 yards distance, he took and dismantled it ‡: The remains of that *Dune*, or Celtic fortification, are still visible, and all its ditches and covered ways exhibit a curious specimen of ancient fortification. The country people have a romantic tradition of it, handed down from father to son ; and the name of the place where the army halted, is called, in the language of the country, Lagnalongcart, that is, the hollow of the baggage ||.

King Edward having overrun all Scotland, for fear

* Holingshead's History of Scotland.

† Abercromby.

‡ Taken a second time by Oliver Cromwell, and its inner citadel blown up.

|| Abercromby.

of losing in winter what he had acquired in summer, stayed during the winter with the prince his son, at Dunfermline, which had this effect, that the guardian, Sir John Cumine of Badenoch, and a great many more of the nobility and gentry, submitted to him in February 1304, on the following terms :

1mo, That all who submitted with the guardian, John Cumine, should neither be imprisoned nor disinherited, except Robert, Bishop of Glasgow,—James, Steward of Scotland,—John Foules,—David Graham,—Alexander Lindsey,—Simon Fraser,—Thomas Bois,—and Monsieur William Walleys ; all of these were to be banished, but the last, who must submit himself wholly to the king's mercy ; which, however, he scorned to do.

2do, That the fines to be exacted for former faults should be regulated by the king in his next parliament.

3tio, That all the strong holds in the king's hands should remain so, and the charge of keeping them be defrayed by the owners.

4to, That all prisoners on both sides be released.

But, notwithstanding these conditions, King Edward, doubtful that he had wholly subdued Scotland, to secure his conquests, sent above 100 persons of quality prisoners to different fortresses in England, and reduced all suspected persons by banishment and fines. He appointed his nephew, John of Britany, guardian or

lieutenant. The late guardian, Sir John Cumine, and all who had last year submitted with him upon the faith of the above conditions, were ordered to pay three years value of their lands; but Sir Simon Fraser, who was one of the noble patriots excepted last year, was, in the year 1305, banished by King Edward, not only from Britain and Ireland, but likewise from France *.

Sir Simon, in the mean time, concealed himself in the north, till next year, that King Robert Bruce asserted his title to the crown, and endeavoured to recover his own and the nation's rights; then Sir Simon appeared once more, and perhaps with as much glory, as when he triumphed thrice in one day at Roslin. He was, doubtless, with the king at his coronation; since we find him along with him at the battle of Methven so soon thereafter.

When King Edward flattered himself that he might peaceably reap the fruit of his many victories, at least that he was to expect nothing but peace and compliance from Scotland, which he had thrice over-run by his arms—he was informed that Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, had assumed the title of King of Scotland, and was crowned at Scoon. It galled him that so much blood and treasure had been spent in vain. He immediately raised a powerful army, which he sent

* Tyrell. Vol. III. p. 157. Abercromby.

to Scotland, to crush the insurrection in the bud, under the command of Rymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, with Robert Clifford and Henry Reny, and took an oath of the Prince of Wales and the great men of the kingdom, that, if he should happen to die in that expedition, (for he had made a solemn vow that he would follow his generals to Scotland,) that they should not bury his body till they obtained a complete victory over the Usurper and that perfidious nation.

The whole nation was affected with the same spirit of revenge that possessed the king, and so all ranks contributed largely to carry on the war. Nor were the Scots, such as adhered to the Cumines, less animated against King Robert; and these were no inconsiderable part of the nation. The Cumines were dispersed all over the kingdom; and their fast friends, the Earls of March and Angus, the Lord Lorn*, the Lord Abernethy, the Lord Brechin, the Lord Soules, and Duncan M'Dougal, commanded a great part of the kingdom†.

It was at this dangerous conjuncture that Sir Simon, with his brother Sir Alexander Fraser, joined

* Of the surname of M'Dougal. The Earldom after this passed to the Stewarts, Earl of Lorn, and by marriage of co-heiresses, was portioned between Argyle and Breadalbane, and gives Argyle title of Marquis.

† Boeth. Buchanan, &c.

King Robert, who, upon the approach of the united forces of England, under the command of the Earl of Pembroke, drew together his small army at Methven, upon the river of Amond, near Perth, where the English general surprised him in the night, and forced his camp before the King could draw up his men †.

The slaughter was not great, because the raw unexperienced commonalty presently fled, and were not pursued ; for the King and the gentry about him stood their ground too long, till they were surrounded on all sides, and it was a wonder that any of them escaped. The King was thrice dismounted from his horse by the prevailing enemy, and as often rescued and replaced in the saddle by the incomparable valour and presence of mind of Sir Simon Fraser.

At length, the Scots cavalry having an eye upon one another, made one bold and successful effort to get through the squadrons of the enemy ; yet several of them were taken ; namely, Sir Thomas Randolph, Sir Alexander Fraser, Sir David Barclay, Sir David Inchmartin, Sir Hugh Hay, and Sir John Somervail.

Sir Simon escaped with the King ; and of him alone it may be said, that he gained three battles in one day ; and in another, three times preserved the life of his king. For the gallant behaviour of Sir Simon at Methven, he got the three crowns added to the

† Math. Westministir. Rym. Tom. iii. p. 1123. Abercromby.

Fraises, his original coat of arms; which has been used by his successors, the Lords of Loveth, and their numerous cadets, since that memorable event. And they must be great strangers to heraldry, who know not that the three crowns were not the armorial bearing of the Bissets.

After this battle at Methven, so fatal to the nation, the loyal party were extremely discouraged. The commonalty retired to their respective habitations. The King, with about 500 men, escaped to Argyleshire, to his brother-in-law Sir Niel Campbell; thither Sir Simon Fraser attended him, and was with him at the battle of Dalree, after which the royal cause seemed quite undone; for the King, for want of necessaries, could not keep together the small party that had attended him till then.

Whether Sir Simon parted with him, when he was obliged to send his Queen, with the ladies that attended her, and his brother Sir Niel Bruce, to the strong castle of Kildrin-my, in Marr, I know not. But Sir Simon had the honour to conduct the King to the north *, and to be the principal instrument in giving the first happy turn to the affairs of this Prince; which was a noble beginning to those repeated triumphs that afterwards adorned the rest of his life.

* Major, lib. iv. Dempster, lib. x.

For, after the King had lurked for some time in the hills, Sir Simon, with his friends, joined him in attacking the castle of Inverness, which they took, and then marched through the Aird, Sir Simon's country, to Dingwall, and took that castle; after which the King marched through Murray, all the castles in his way surrendering to him.

It is remarkable, that Sir Simon and Sir Alexander Fraser, his brother, were the only persons of quality who came to the King's assistance before the defeat of Buchan. But before that time, Sir Simon Fraser and Sir Walter Logan, of the house of Restalreg, were seized by some of the adherents of the Earl of Buchan, who was then the principal man of the Cunnines, and were delivered to the English, who sent them in irons to London †.

Dempster's words are, "At this time Simon Fraser, who had conducted King Robert Bruce from the northern parts of Scotland, was taken by the treachery of the Earl of Buchan, and with many others put to death at London."

Mr Johnston, in his *Heroes Scotiæ*, thus describes the praise of Sir Simon and his dear fellow-sufferer :

Ergo nefas servare fidem, fas fallere dextrum,
Ergo jugum a patria pellere vile nefas,
Crimen non alia luimus. Si crimen in hoc sit.

† Buchanan.

Crimine sit patriam, sit coluisse fidem,
 Non Porsennâ refert tibi talia præmia magne
 Scævola ; magnanimam laudat in hoste fidem.

The celebrated author of the *Scoto Chronicon*, who may well be depended upon, gives this loyal and resolute patriot the character, that he was not only of a fearless undaunted temper, but was also endowed with all the qualifications of a good man, and so indefatigable in opposition to the enemies of his country, that, for upwards of four years that he shared the command of the Scots forces with Sir John Cumine, he never ceased to harass and plague the enemy, both by night and by day.

Though the Scots authors so highly extol Sir Simon, the English do him yet more justice. Pryn tells us *, that the prisoners who were taken at and after the battle of Methven, and committed to the Tower of London, put all their confidence in him. And as they knew him to be invincible in battle, and not to be taken by surprize ; so they were confident, that Scotland would never be lost while he was alive. Nay, some of them presumed so much upon his courage and conduct, that one of them said, he would lay down his own head upon the block when Sir Simon suffered himself to be apprehended.

But how surprized and confounded were they,

* Tom. iii. p. 1126.

when, some time afterwards, the brave Sir Simon was also carried in chains to the Tower, in the year 1307. King Edward was inexorable. John, Earl of Athole, though allied to himself, he preferred to a higher gallows than any of the rest. King Robert's brothers, Niel, Thomas, and Alexander Bruces ; his brother-in-law Sir Christopher Seaton—John Seaton, brother to Sir Christopher, Walter Logan, Herbert Norham, Thomas Bois, and Adam Wallace, brother to the great Sir William, were all put at different times to death.

But the sentence executed on Sir Simon was far more severe than on these. He was kept in fetters while in the Tower, and on the day of execution, he was dragged through the streets as a traitor, hanged on a high gibbet as a thief, and his head cut off as a murderer. Then his body, after being twenty days, in derision, fixed to a wooden horse, was at last consumed in a fire, and his head placed near that of Sir William Wallace, on the bridge of London * !

He was in the 49th year of his age. He left a daughter, Margaret, married afterwards to the Laird of Knockmiller, Simon his heir, and Andrew and James his brother.

† The Lord Chief Justice of England, with dignity, remonstrated to King Edward, That he had no authority to put prisoners of war to death : But in vain.

Sir Simon Fraser, his son, was not 20 years of age at his father's death ; yet, young as he was, as soon as he heard of his father's being prisoner, he immediately repaired to the King, to prevent his friends and followers from deserting the royal standard, as was the custom then, and continues to be with the Highlanders upon the loss of their chieftain. And though King Robert's affairs were in a very precarious situation ; yet neither his untimely death, nor the terrifying opposition he had in view, did, in the least degree, discourage him from treading in the steps of his loyal and illustrious father, but he pursued steadily what he had so much at heart, the recovering the honour and independency of his country. And as he could not place before him a fitter pattern in any thing that was good and great ; so he proved to be a son every way worthy of such a father, and invariably pursued the design of maintaining the dignity and honour of the crown, and the liberty and independency of Scotland, till at last his efforts were attended with complete success.

As the friendship and assistance of the two loyal brothers, Sir Simon and Sir Alexander Fraser, who were the King's kinsmen, says Mr Barber†, was what the King most trusted to, when he resolved to go North ; and, as Sir Simon had the honour to be the

† Dr Barber's Life of King Robert Bruce.

principal instrument in giving the first favourable turn to the royal cause in the north, by taking the castles of Inverness and Dingwall; so it was a very sensible mortification to him, to be deprived of so great and experienced a commander, when the gallant Sir Simon fell into the hands of the Earl of Buchan's friends.

But the arrival of his young son animated his dispirited friends, and kept them together. He constantly attended the King while he continued in these parts, and gave early proofs of his valour at the battle of Inverury, where the joint forces of the rebellious Cumines, and their numerous adherents, were totally defeated, and thereby the whole north was reduced to the King's obedience.

Mr Barber, though in every other respect a very valuable author, yet is so unchronological, that it is not easy to distinguish, by him, betwixt the one Sir Simon and the other; for he all along calls Sir Simon Sir Alexander's brother; whereas, the one was his brother, who first joined the King in the north; the other Sir Simon, who went south with him, was the nephew of Sir Alexander; and Mr Barber sometimes joins both together. Mr Crawford speaks without book when he says that Sir Alexander Fraser gave the first turn to the King's affairs in the north. I would not chuse to derogate from the one of those eminently great patriots to add to the other, each had

a sufficient stock of merit of his own ; nor does either of them stand in need of any borrowed lustre.

Sir Alexander Fraser, as was above hinted, was taken prisoner by the English at Methven, and continued in the enemies hands, till Sir John Douglas having, by his bravery, defeated two different bodies of the English, retook him and Sir Thomas Randolph. Sir Alexander Fraser being at liberty, returned north ; and no sooner did the king come to those parts, but he joined him. Mr Barber's words are :

Yan waux his power mair and mair,
And he thot weill that he wou'd fair,
Oute our the Month with his menze,
To luk quha that his frind wuld be.
Into Sir Alexander Fraser
He traistyt, for that lofyings wer,
And his brodyr Simon that twa
He had—Mystere weile of ma.

And afterwards he says :

And turn we till the Noble King,
That with the folk of his lading,
Towart the month has tane his way,
Right stoutly and till good array ;
Quhar Alysander Fraser him met,
And also his brodyr Simon et,
With all the folk they with them had.
The King good countenance them maid,
That was right blythe of their cumin.

After defeating the Earl of Buchan and his adherents, at Old Meldrum, or Inverury, the north was reduced to the King's obedience—says Barber,

The north country all haililie,
Obeyed to his senyorie ;
So that the North the Month was nane,
But they his men were common ilk ane.

After this, Sir Simon and his friends marched south with the King, and was with him at the siege of the castles of Forfar and Buchan *. But his Highness, being, it seems, unwilling to lose men and time, in mere sieges, and desiring to make himself master of the lands possessed by the Cumings and their allies, his inveterate enemies, he marched straight to the shire of Argyle, where the Lord Lorn, a near relation of the Cumings, endeavoured to obstruct his progress, by posting 2000 men on a high mountain, over which it was necessary the army should pass. But the King, having got notice of his design, sent a strong detachment under the command of Sir James Douglas, Sir Alexander Fraser, and Sir Andrew Grey†, with orders to fetch a circuit about, and by this means to get up the hill, by ways the enemy had not taken care to guard.

* Barber's Life of King Robert Bruce.

† Archdeacon Barber.

The stratagem succeeded, and the Highlanders found themselves charged, both by that detachment and the main body of the King's army. The Master of Lorn, John of Argyle, having seen his men cut to pieces, fled and escaped by sea into England ; so that his father was forced to give up both his own person, and his strong castle of Dumstaffnage, to the King's mercy *.

Sir Simon Fraser, after this, served King Robert with great valour and fidelity, in all the lesser victories he obtained, and had the honour to signalize his courage and conduct, in the glorious battle of Bannockburn.

BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN,

1314.

King Edward II. being piqued and hurt at the continual success of King Robert, in Scotland, and the repeated inroads and devastations made by him in the North of England, was resolved, with one blow, quite to undo a nation that had put so many signal affronts on his father and himself. He therefore summoned all the forces his dominions could raise, and came to York in May, 1314. Yorkshire

* Archdeacon Barber.

supplied him with 4000 men, and all the rest of England in proportion.

He entered Scotland with an army so great, that the like was never seen before nor since that time, in Britain. Boethius says, it consisted of more than 300,000 men, of all nations, that were either subject to, or in friendship with the King of England : namely, English, Welsh, Irish, Gascons, Flemings, Dutch, &c. and that from all parts of the Continent, as well as England, huge numbers came down upon Scotland, as to a country which, as a reward of their certain victory, and undoubted conquest, they were to divide among themselves, and to transmit to their posterity *.

On the other hand, the Scots army consisted of no more than 30,000 men ; but they were all well-appointed, advantageously posted, flushed with successes, hardened with continual use of war, and who carried all their hopes of life, liberty, and honour, on the points of their swords, and were besides headed by a leader worth multitudes.

He took up his ground within two miles of the Castle of Stirling, behind a small brook, called Bannockburn ; and to render the passage, which in summer was easy, as dangerous to the enemy as could be, he caused deep pits and trenches to be made ; in

* Boethius, Holinshed, and all other historians.

these he planted sharp stakes, and so artfully covered them over with green turfs, that the advancing enemy could not distinguish them from solid ground. Thus was his front guarded against the first onset of the English horse ; on one side, he was flanked by inaccessible rocks, and on the other with a spot of moorish ground. And having spent the night preceding the battle in prayer, he made the whole army receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; and in the morning, when they advanced towards the enemy, the whole army fell on their knees to implore the blessing of heaven. The approaching enemy seeing this, concluded that the Scots were frightened into a submission, and that by this humble posture, they meant to ask mercy, and beg their lives ; but they were soon undeceived.

The King commanded the main body ; his brother Edward Bruce, the right wing ; and his nephew, Thomas Randolph, the left. The battle began on the left, to which the right of the English advanced with great swiftness ; but before they could come to a close engagement, great numbers of the English fell headlong into the ditches placed in their way. This occasioned an universal surprise and disorder, which Thomas Randolph improved to good purpose.

As the King was leading on the main body, one Sir Richard Bohem, who knew him, thinking to determine the fate of the day all at once, made a sud-

den pass with a spear at his body ; but the King waved it with great dexterity, and coming up to him, laid him dead on the spot with a stroke of his halberd ; which so animated the Scots, that in a moment they fell upon, and broke through the enemy's ranks. Great valour was seen on both sides. At length the English gave way, having received at this time the greatest overthrow they ever sustained *, having lost no less than 50,000 killed, either in the field of battle or in the chace, and among these many of the first rank. King Edward narrowly escaped. Some English acknowledge †, that after this defeat the English became so disheartened, that a hundred of them would fly from three Scots soldiers.

King Robert ordered Sir James Douglas, with 400 horse, to pursue King Edward ; and it is certain they had overtaken him, had not Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March, received him into his castle of Dunbar, which Sir James was not in case to besiege, but waited betwixt that and Berwick, hoping to intercept him. But King Edward, to avoid this danger, went aboard a fisher's boat, and got to Berwick by sea ‡.

By this glorious victory, obtained June 23d 1314, the kingdom of Scotland was not only recovered, but

* Eachard, Book ii.

† Walsingham, p. 186. Eachard.

‡ Abercromby, and other historians.

the monarchy restored to its ancient splendour and independent state.

Now it was, that the King began to reward the loyalty and merit of such of his subjects as had deserved best at his hands; and few having a better title to his favour or countenance, or that had a greater stock of both personal and family merit, than Sir Simon Fraser, he bestowed upon him many charters of lands in the north; some of them upon his own resignation; for we find, that even before this he had a great interest in the north, from the seasonable assistance his father and he afforded the King, when he retired north after the battle of Methven.

But, besides the lands he formerly possessed in Inverness-shire, he was made Constable of the fort of Loveth; and the Constabulary of the castle of Elgin was bestowed by the King on Sir Patrick Graham, who was Constable of Loveth, and, even in John Bisset's time, designs himself of Loveth; which I take to be the reason why Sir Simon, or his father, did not design themselves of Loveth before this time; and therefore their contemporary writers did not give them that title; and latter writers have fancied, that it was only at that time that this Sir Simon settled at Loveth; the contrary of which I think evident from what has been related, and will be evident to any that reads the life of King Robert the Bruce, by Mr Barber. Sir Simon was now put in possession, not

only of the greatest part of Sir John Bisset's estate, but likewise of the castle and fort of Lovat *.

But his Majesty's bounty did not stop here to Sir Simon ; but, as a distinguishing mark of his favour, he married him to his niece, Julia Ross, daughter to Hugh Earl of Ross, by Matilda Bruce, the King's sister, whose true name was Sinclair, but took that of Ross, from the country they possessed.

The King also bestowed upon him several other lands in the shires of Kincardine and Forfar. There is marked, in the rolls of King Robert the First, a charter *dilecto et fidele suo Simoni Fraser milite*, of the lands of Brotherton and Innerbervy, in the shire of Kincardine, which before that belonged to Sir Edmund Hastings, an Englishman, who adhered to his countrymen, and so lost the very considerable estate he had in Scotland †.

And besides all this, the King, for some distinguished piece of service, gave Sir Simon the lands of Kinnell, in the shire of Forfar ; and from thence he came to be commonly called the Knight of Kinnell.

Sir Simon adhered closely to King Robert Bruce, till he delivered his country and crown, not only from subjection and conquest, but also from the least

* Memoirs of the House of Lovat.

† Ancestor to that able statesman and soldier, Earl Moira.

shadow or ground of so much as a claim, or after-pretension to superiority over it ; and, notwithstanding the almost insuperable difficulties he met with in the beginning, he made King Edward the First know, at his death, that he died neither the superior nor conqueror of Scotland ; and the injuries done by the father, he retaliated upon his unfortunate son, King Edward the Second, and forced no less than a parliamentary acknowledgment from the grandson of King Edward the First, that the reigns of his father and grandfather had been calamitous, by reason of their claim to superiority over Scotland, and that the crown King Robert wore was, and ought to be, imperial and independent.

King Robert the Bruce died the 7th of June 1329, and was succeeded by his only son David, a child but of eight years old.

As Sir Simon continued firm and unshaken in his fidelity to King Robert, so he was no less firm in his loyalty and steady adherence to King David, his son and successor in the throne ; for, upon the invasion of Edward Baliol, son of John Baliol, sometime King of Scotland, he repairs, with his friends and followers, to the Royal standard set up at Perth.

He was at the unfortunate battle of Duplin, where the English army surprised them in the night time, by the treachery of Tulibarden, who directed the enemy to the ford of the river Ern, where so many

brave Scotsmen fell, and among the rest Sir Alexander Fraser, and many of his friends, who performed the part of a brave and vigilant officer, being one of the few that were awake, when by far the greatest part were sleeping * ; and though he performed wonders at the head of his followers, and such others as he could draw together ; yet he was overpowered with numbers, and slain, the 3d August 1332.

After this defeat, our historians say the Pretender took Perth, and was soon thereafter, on the 27th of September, crowned at Scoon, and then marched south, carrying all before him : but still the majority of the nation remained undaunted ; and Sir Simon Fraser, having escaped from Duplin, soon gathered together his friends and vassals, commanded by himself and his brothers Andrew and James Frasers, and, together with Robert Keith, son to Sir Robert killed at Duplin, and Alexander Lindsay, were the most forward. They rendezvouzed near Perth, and had the good success to retake it after a vigorous defence ; the Earl of Fife the governor, with his lady and children, were sent prisoners to the castle of Kildrummy in Mar ; and Andrew Murray of Tulibarden was publicly executed †.

About this time the Pretender, Lord Edward Ba-

* Boethius, Buchanan, &c.

† Buch. Boethius, &c.

liol, lay at Annan, his paternal inheritance, where he thought himself quite secure, and intended to keep a merry Christmas; of which the Scots chiefs having intelligence, Sir John Randolph Earl of Murray, son to the great Thomas the regent, Archibald Douglas Lord of Galloway, and Sir Simon Fraser *, at the head of 1000 horse, attacked and surprised the enemy, and put most of them to the sword. The Pretender escaped with great difficulty on horseback without either saddle or bridle †; but that young and valiant Lord Henry Baliol, his brother, was killed on the spot, the 25th of December 1332.

Thus these brave patriots retrieved in one day, with one blow, and the bravery of 1000 horse, the repeated losses of five months; and in this manner, and in so short a time, did the Lord Edward Baliol win and lose his crown.

During these transactions, the young King David and his Queen Jean were sent by these noble patriots to the castle of Dumbarton, believed to be impregnable, where they were kept in safety by Sir Malcom Fleming the governor, till after the battle of Hallidon hill, that he conveyed them to France.

King Edward purposes to invade Scotland with a powerful army. The Scots were not behind with

* Major, lib. iv.

† All our historians (Buchanan, lib. ix.)

him in their preparations. As the King of England intended to besiege Berwick, commanded by Sir Alexander Seton for the Scots, as the castle was by the Earl of March; so the Scots resolved to force the English to raise the siege. Both armies came in view of each other on the 19th of July. The English left their camp, and posted themselves so advantageously on Hollydown-hill, a little west of Berwick, that one man would be an over-match for four; yet, notwithstanding of this advantageous situation, no reason could prevail with Lord Archibald Douglas, who commanded the Scots in chief, to forbear attacking them; John Randolph, Earl of Murray, was unluckily sick at this time*.

The Scots army moved in four great bodies. In the van were these Lords; John Murray, who commanded in place of John Randolph, Sir Simon Fraser, and his two brothers, Andrew and James Reginald Cheyne, Patrick Graham, John Grant, James Carlisle, Patrick Parker, Robert Caldcotes, Philip Meldrum, Thomas and Gilbert Wisemans, Adam Gordon, James Gramont, Robert Brady, Hugh Parker, with 40 knights new dubbed, 600 men at arms, 3000 commons.

In the first division of the second body, young Robert, Lord High Steward, afterwards King, Sir

* Boethius, Buchanan, Abercromby.

James Stewart Earl of Monteith, his uncle William Douglas, David Lindsay, Malcom Fleming, William Keith, Duncan Campbell, with 30 batchelors new dubbed. And, in the second division, James Stewart of Coldam, Adam Stewart, William Abernethy, William Morrice, William Erskin, Adam Murray, Walter Fitzgilbert, John Shaton, and Robert Walker ; this second body consisted of 700 men at arms, 1700 commoners. In the third body, were Hugh Earl of Ross, Kenneth Earl of Sutherland, the Earl of Strathern, William Kirley, John Camron, Gilbert Hay, William Ramsay, William Gordon, &c. with 40 knights new dubbed, 900 men at arms, and 15,000 commoners.

In the fourth body, Lord Archibald Douglas, commander in chief, the Earl of Lenox, Alexander Bruce Earl of Carrick, John Campbell, son to the brave Sir Neil Campbell of Lochow, Robert Sternalaw, William Vipont, Robert Lawder, John Lindsay, Alexander Graham, David Weems, Michael Scot, Thomas Bois, Roger Mortimer, William Umphraville, Thomas Vans, William Lundie, with 30 batchelors, 900 men at arms, and 10,000 commoners.

Besides these, the Earl of Dunbar, Sir Alexander Seton, and the town of Berwick had 550 men at arms, and 10,800 foot ; so that the whole army, according to the English account, amounted to upwards of

69,000 *. However, they were far inferior to the English army ; yet they would fight, and did so with their usual bravery, but to their irretrievable loss ; for they were overwhelmed with the distant shot of two great bodies of archers, which King Edward planted designedly in the front of the army ; so that great numbers of the Scots were rendered useless before they could get up the hill to come to blows. And when at length they came up the hill, fatigued and breathless as they were, it was no hard task to bear down the foremost from the higher ground, and these falling back upon the following ranks, disordered the whole.

The Scots, in short, were entirely routed ; and what added to their misfortune, their pages and servants, with whom they left their horses, seeing how matters went, run away with the horses to save themselves, and left their masters destitute. Between 10,000 and 14,000 were killed on the spot ; among these, the Earls of Ross, Sutherland, Carrick, Athole, Lenox, Monteith, three Stewarts, Sir Simon Fraser and his two brothers, Sir John Graham, Sir Duncan Campbell, and the General himself, who, on this occasion, gave such proofs of his courage, as, had it not been fatal to his country, would have ennobled his memory †.

* Barness, Abercromby, &c.

† Abercromby, &c.

Thus Sir Simon, and his two brothers, fell fighting bravely in the service of their country and lawful Sovereign, the 19th of July 1333, in the 46th year of Sir Simon's age. He had issue by Julia Ross, daughter to Hugh Earl of Ross, by Matilda Bruce, sister to King Robert—Simon, Hugh, James, and Janet, who were all that came to age of his children.

Sir Simon Fraser and his father, being the first of their illustrious family who settled in the Aird, it is from them, and particularly from the great Sir Simon, that the Lairds of Lovat have been always called by the Highlanders *Mac-Shim*, or *Macshimi*; that is, Simson, or the son of Simon; and *Mac-Shimi-Mor*, that is, the son or descendant of the great Simon.

And it is by this well known custom in the Highlands, that the chiefs of clans, and the chieftains or heads of old families, and no other but these, have a patronymical designation, taken either from the name of the first founder of the family, or of one of the most remarkable predecessors of the family. Thus, in the Gaelic or Erse, the Duke of Argyle is called *Mac-Calan*, that is, the son of Colin, or *Mac-Calan-More*, the son of the great Colin, as being lineally descended from Sir Colin Campbell of Lochow, who was famous in the reign of king Alexander the third. Thus lord Seaforth is called *Mac-Cennich*, i. e. the son of Kenneth, and Lochiel is called *Mac Dhoil-doa*, i. e. the son of Black Donald, &c.

To Sir Simon, who was killed at Hollydown-hill, succeeded his son, Sir Simon, who was under age at his father's death ; and was the fourth of that name at Lovat, treading in the footsteps of his noble ancestors. He adhered to David with the same firmness and fidelity his grandfather had done to king Robert *.

His mother and uncle, William Earl of Ross, took the greatest care of his education. The good lady lived at Kirkhill, when her son came to be of age ; she spent much of her time in piety, virtue, and charity ; she contributed liberally to the building and beautifying the monastery of Beaulie, and intended to build a stone bridge over the river, and for that end, began to found a pier of large stones, which is still to be seen in the river, called in the language of the country *Carn-na-Vantiern*, i. e. the ladies cairn or heap. But death prevented the execution of this good work.

The first appearance Sir Simon made, was with his uncle William, Earl of Ross, in 1339. Robert, Lord High Steward, was chosen sole regent after the death of Andrew Murray of Bothwell ; and being seconded by many noble patriots, obtained several victories in different skirmishes over the English. But the town of Perth, because of its numerous garrison,

* Memoirs of the House of Lovat, MSS.

strong walls, and situation in the heart of the kingdom, was a great eye-sore to him. He therefore resolved to be master of it, cost what it would. And therefore as soon as the season permitted, he called together the patriots who had supported him formerly, and among the rest, the Earl of Ross; they invested Perth on all sides with a powerful army, divided into four great bodies, commanded by the Lord High Steward, Patrick, Earl of March, William, Earl of Ross, and Maurice Moubray, Lord of Clydsdale *. It was here that young Sir Simon Fraser gave such signal and early proofs of his valour, as raised in his friends an expectation, that he would prove a son worthy of such a father and grandfather, and made him soon after be taken notice of, as one of abilities beyond his years; for he was not 20 years of age at the siege of Perth †.

But though all the officers who commanded at the siege, did all they could do in their respective posts, yet the town was so well fortified, and the English garrison was so strong, that after six weeks spent in continual action, to the much greater loss of the besiegers than of the besieged, they were resolved to raise the siege; till the Earl of Ross, having found means to divert the water from the fosse, had advan-

* Buchanan, Abercromby.

† Memoirs of the House of Lovat, MSS.

ced to the foot of the wall, upon which the English Governor thought fit to surrender.

After this, they besieged and took the castle of Stirling, and soon thereafter took the castle of Edinburgh by stratagem ; in which Sir Simon Fraser had a principal hand. Before I relate the account given by our historians of that time, I must observe, that Boethius, and Major, who follows him, calls him Walter Fraser, but Froissart, who lived at that time, and Buchanan, call him Simon. Crawford, in the life of Sir Alexander, would have him to be Sir William Fraser of Cowie, the Lord Chamberlain's son, and ancestor to Lord Saltoun ; but in order to this, he is forced to contradict all our historians. As we have observed already, of the two gallant brothers, Sir Simon and Sir Alexander had each sufficient merit of his own, without derogating from the merit of any other : so it holds true of Sir William Fraser. He was so distinguished for fidelity and loyalty to his cousin king David, in the worst of times, that he stood in need of no borrowed lustre, by ascribing to him the actions of his young cousin Sir Simon.

The manner of taking the castle of Edinburgh is told by our historians with very little variation. Buchanan's account of it is as follows : One Walter Currie, a merchant, had a ship loaded with wine and provisions, at Dundee ; Sir William Douglas, Lord of Liddesdale, sent for him to come to the Forth with his

ship; and having communicated his design to William Bullock, an Englishman, gained over by Sir William Douglas to the Scots interest, Currie pretends to be an Englishman, and brought some bottles of fine wine and other small presents to the Governor of the castle, and asked him as a favour, that he might be allowed to deposit the rest of his provisions there, as in a place of safety, and to let him know, if he or the garrison stood in need of any thing, and that he would cheerfully supply them to the utmost of his power. The Governor ordered him to bring some hogsheads of wine, and a quantity of biscuits to him, and promised him access whenever he pleased, wishing him success. Currie told that he would come early in the morning, for fear of being discovered by the Scots. Douglas, and twelve chosen men, whom he had picked out that night, having put on sailors habits above their armour, advanced towards the castle, carrying the provision; and having placed their friends in ambush, as near the castle as they could, they desired them to wait the signal. Sir William Douglas and Sir Simon Fraser, having advanced a little before the rest, they ordered them to follow them at due distance. Douglas and Fraser being admitted by the porter, within the palisadoes, or outward rampart, and observing that the keys of the gate hung over his arm, they immediately dispatch him, and without any noise, open the gate to their

friends ; to whom, as they agreed, they gave a signal by blowing a horn. This alarmed both the garrison and those that lay in ambush ; and while both parties run to the gate, the Scots threw down their burdens in the very entry of the gate, to prevent the gates being shut before the Scots could climb up the steep ascent they had to come to the castle. After a sharp engagement of great slaughter on both sides, the garrison surrendered, having been all killed on the spot, except the Governor and six men *.

Sir Simon was amongst the number of those patriots who suffered the greatest hardships in defending their country for several years, without any assistance from their king. At length, they agreed to a truce with the English for four months, about the year 1341, upon condition, that if king David did not come to them by the month of May thereafter, they should submit to the king of England. So say all our historians till Abercromby, who indeed thinks it ridiculous, that patriots who opposed king Edward at the head of numerous armies, and in the heart of their country, should now think of so mean terms, when they had re-taken all the forts in the kingdom except Berwick and Roxburgh. Besides, that there is no mention of any such truce, either in Rhymer, or any other record, Scots, English, or French.

* Buchanan, lib. 9. Boethius, Major, &c.

But be this as it will, it is certain the nation sent four knights to call home the king from France; and it is as certain, that Froissart, who was in Scotland, and in the court of king David, tells us that Sir Simon Fraser was one of these four, who went for and brought home the king.

Sir Simon, after the king's return, waited almost constantly on him.

At the unfortunate battle of Durham, so fatal to the nation, Sir Simon Fraser was wounded. He came north and was cured of his wound, but died soon thereafter at Lovat unmarried, in the 25th year of his age, in February 1347, according to the stile now used, and was buried at Beaulie*.

He was succeeded by his brother, Hugh Fraser of Lovat, Lord or *dominus* de Loveth, as he is designed in several authentic deeds, and in the archives of the family. He was but young at his brother's death: He was served and retoured to his father in the year 1349.

He trode in the footsteps of his noble predecessors, and adhered firmly both to king David and his successor and nephew, king Robert II. But the character given of him by my author shews, that he was not in all points fit for a courtier of the age he lived in. He was a man of great vivacity and sprightliness, full of courage and resolution. He disdained mean com-

* Memoirs of the House of Lovat.

pliance even in the king's presence. He could maintain what he spoke, and speak what he thought right and just, however dangerous or disagreeable. But he had such an absolute command of his passions, and such an evenness of temper, that he was compared to the Caspian sea, that never ebbs or flows.

I apprehend it was partly owing to his youth, and partly to the untimely fate of his elder brother, as well as of his father and grandfather, that he was not sent up as one of the hostages for the ransom of king David, who had been taken prisoner at the battle of Durham in the year 1346, with the other great men of quality, who went to England upon that occasion.

The first time I find him acting on the stage of business, is that of holding some part of his estate of the Episcopal see of Murray. He did his homage in the church of Elgin, the 13th day of September 1367, for the lands of Kirtarlaty and the Ess or Linn, and his part of the fishing of the water of Forne, in presence of Sir William de Keith, Marischal of Scotland, Thomas Prior of Pluscardin, Andrew de Barclay, lord or laird of Guirntilly, John de Dallas, laird or lord of Cardil*.

Upon the death of king David Bruce, who died in the castle of Edinburgh without issue, the 22d of Fe-

* Genealogy of the royal family of Scotland, p, 54.

bruary 1371, Robert Stewart, his nephew by his sister Marjory Bruce, succeeded him.

Hugh Fraser of Loveth repaired to Perth, and assisted at the solemnity of the coronation the 27th March; and at the Parliament that met then at Perth. William Earl of Ross, uncle to Loveth, was in as high a degree of favour at court; for he was both nephew and brother in law to the new king Robert II. *

For some years before his accession to the throne, he had married Euphame Ross, daughter of Hugh Earl of Ross; and Hugh Earl of Ross had married, to his second wife, Jean Stewart, the Lord High Steward, Walter the IV's. daughter, by Alice Erskine daughter to Sir John Erskine; and this lady, Jean Stewart, was mother to William Earl of Ross, and sister to king Robert the II. †

While the public state of the kingdom was embarrassed with perpetual wars with England, several loose people in the North, particularly some of the Earl of Ross's vassals, laying hold of a conjuncture so favourable, committed the greatest outrages; to suppress which Lord Loveth was sent north with an ample commission, as the king's lieutenant ‡; the first commission that was given of this kind to any in the North.

* Genealogy of the royal family of Scotland.

† Memoirs of the family of Lovat.

‡ Ibid.

And being bred, and having formed his way of thinking in the more southern and most civilized parts of the kingdom, he not only conceived the laudable idea, but in virtue of his commission, by reiterated exertions, gave an effectual check to levying war, without Royal authority, for the sake of booty. The family from this time, by reason of their local situation, came by degrees to act their parts on a less public stage. We shall therefore continue these annals by a genealogical tree, on an extended scale, systematically arranged, with notes sufficiently copious to transmit their future transactions worthy of record ; and occasionally those of such families as they have had the honour to form connections with by marriage :--- which will answer the double purpose of handing down their genealogy and biography together.

Edinburgh :

Printed by James Ballantyne.

X

